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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/617,309	07/10/2003	Mingyan Liu	4002-3300	3586
7590	03/22/2005			EXAMINER
Woodard, Emhardt, Moriarty, McNett & Henry LLP Bank One Center/Tower Suite 3700 111 Monument Circle Indianapolis, IN 46204-5137			BARRETT, THOMAS C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3738	
DATE MAILED: 03/22/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/617,309	LIU ET AL.	
	Examiner Thomas C. Barrett	Art Unit 3738	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 January 2005.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 27-29 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 27-29 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election without traverse of claims 27-29 in the reply filed on January 24, 2005 is acknowledged.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 27-29 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Specification

The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required: There is a lack of antecedent basis for the limitation "the first and second terminal parts are positioned interior of the first and second peripheral side walls".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Godefroy et al. (5,683,463). Godefroy et al. discloses a method of implanting an arcuate intervertebral implant between the first vertebra and the second vertebra wherein the first and second terminal parts are positioned interior of the first and second peripheral side walls (Fig. 5).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Godefroy et al. (5,683,463) in view of Thomas et al. (5,925,056). Godefroy et al. discloses a method of implanting an arcuate intervertebral implant as above however Godefroy et al. fails to disclose cutting the cortical endplates. Thomas et al. teaches a method comprising removing a portion of the first and second cortical bone endplates with a tool having cutting portion including a pair of generally parallel opposing surfaces, each surface having a first arcuate cutting edge corresponding to the upper surface of the implant and an opposite second arcuate cutting edge corresponding to the lower surface of the implant (col. 3, lines 11-21). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teaching of cutting the cortical endplates, as taught by Thomas et al., to a method of implanting an arcuate intervertebral implant as

per Godefroy et al., the motivation to combine being "animal studies have indicated that circular holes in the intervertebral disk space provide an improved response to healing over those that are square, rectangular, or cruciate in shape" as found in Thomas et al. (col. 2, lines 5-17).

Claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Godefroy et al. (5,683,463) in view of Henry et al. (5,766,252). Godefroy et al. discloses a method of implanting a metal arcuate intervertebral implant as above however Godefroy et al. fails to disclose the metal being titanium. Henry et al. teaches the use of titanium for an intervertebral implant (col. 5, lines 39-45). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teaching of titanium for an intervertebral implant, as taught by Henry et al., to a method of implanting an implant as per Godefroy et al., the motivation to combine being "Such an alloy has the further advantage of being suitable for visualization by either radiological or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) techniques", as found in Henry et al. (col. 5, lines 39-45).

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within

TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas C. Barrett whose telephone number is (571) 272-4746. The examiner can normally be reached Tuesday-Friday between 9:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on (571) 272-4754. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9306 for regular communications.

Art Unit: 3738

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Thomas Barrett
Examiner
Art Unit: 3738